

## **TELEWORKING PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

Teleworking involves the use of telecommunications and/or computer technologies which allow employees to perform a portion of their assigned duties at an alternate worksite, such as the employee's home, a satellite office, or a teleworking work center.

Offering state employees the opportunity to telework is a management option and employees are obligated to follow policies established by their agencies. The goals and objectives of any teleworking program must be clearly communicated by management to ensure that teleworking does not affect the level of service provided to the public.

The following teleworking policy recommendations were adopted as the Model State Government Telecommuting Policy.

### **Employment Conditions**

1. Teleworking is not a universal employee benefit, and a state employee's participation in an agency's teleworking program is entirely voluntary. The participation may be terminated with reasonable notice by the employee or management.
2. Employee salary, benefits, worker's compensation, and other employer insurance coverage shall not change due to teleworking. Likewise, the duties, obligations, and responsibilities of teleworking employees remain unchanged.
3. Work hours, overtime compensation, and the use of vacation and sick leave for teleworkers shall conform to Washington State Merit System Rules, WAC Title 356.
4. Each agency implementing a teleworking program shall develop consistent and equitable eligibility criteria for participation.
5. Performance evaluation requirements for teleworkers shall not differ from non-teleworkers.
6. A formal teleworking agreement shall be completed by the employee and the employee's supervisor and subject to management approval. It should include the work schedule; the location of the alternate worksite; a brief description of the work activities involved; communications procedures to be employed; what equipment and/or supplies (including computer hardware/software configurations) will be used and who will provide them; and any applicable data security procedures.
7. A copy of the teleworking agreement shall be kept on file with each teleworker's supervisor, the agency's personnel office, and/or any other designated location.
8. Teleworking shall not be used as a substitute for dependent care. Teleworkers shall make necessary arrangements for their dependents during the agreed upon work hours to ensure the successful completion of the teleworker's assigned work duties.
9. In the event circumstances prohibit the teleworker from performing his or her assigned duties while teleworking at the alternate worksite, the teleworker shall contact his or her supervisor for further instructions.

### **Alternate Work Site**

1. Each agency is responsible for providing standards to ensure a safe and healthy work environment for the teleworker at the alternate worksite.
2. When the teleworker's alternate worksite is in the home, the teleworker shall be responsible for maintaining a designated work space in a safe, healthy, professional, and secure manner.
3. To ensure that safe working conditions exist at the alternate worksite, the state shall retain the right to make on-site inspections.

### **Equipment and Supplies**

1. All equipment and supplies furnished to teleworkers by their agency remain the property of the agency and are to be used only by authorized persons for legitimate state purposes, as specified in RCW 42.18.217 and Executive Order No. 9204. The teleworker is responsible for the proper use of all state provided equipment and supplies.
2. Unless otherwise agreed to in writing by agency management prior to any loss, damage, or wear, the state does not assume liability for loss, damage, or wear of employee-owned equipment or supplied used while teleworking.
3. Teleworkers using state-provided computer software shall adhere to the manufacturer's licensing agreements, including the prohibition against unauthorized duplication.
4. Restricted-access materials shall not be taken from the official work station or accessed through computers by teleworkers unless approved by agency management.
5. To protect confidentiality and guard against data contamination, teleworkers shall follow agency approved data security procedures at their alternate worksite.
6. Office supplies for use by teleworkers at their alternate worksites shall be provided by the state and should be obtained during the teleworker's in-office work periods. Out-of-pocket expenses for supplies or services shall be reimbursed according to existing agency procedures.

### **Communications**

1. Teleworkers and their supervisors shall develop procedures to ensure that effective communications and workflow are maintained among clients, coworkers, and management.
2. Teleworkers should use the SCAN system to place work-related long distance phone calls. Long distance call charges using other carriers will be reimbursed according to existing agency procedures.

### **Selection, Training, and Evaluation**

1. Each agency implementing a teleworking program shall develop a fair and consistent selection process for determining which employees are allowed to telework.
2. Each agency implementing a teleworking program shall develop or adopt a teleworking training course, which all teleworkers and their supervisors shall attend.
3. Each agency implementing a telecommuting program shall conduct an evaluation of the program.